

What is Claimed Is:

1. A system for processing telephone orders comprising:
input telephone circuitry for receiving incoming telephone calls from customers, and
order processing circuitry responsive to order information supplied from the input
circuitry for conducting an interactive session with a customer to fulfil a request for an item
being ordered, without intervention of a human operator.
2. The system of claim 1, wherein the order processing circuitry is configured to
determine whether the requested item is available, before completing the interactive session.
3. The system of claim 1, wherein the order processing circuitry is configured to
determine whether the requested item is available for delivery during a time interval
requested by the customer, before completing the interactive session.
4. The system of claim 1, wherein the order processing circuitry is configured to
request delivery of the item to a point of sale selected by the customer.
5. The system of claim 1, wherein the order processing system is responsive to
information identifying the customer for determining a customer's profile indicating
preferences of the customer.

6. The system of claim 5, wherein the customer's profile contain a customer's voice sample for recognizing voice messages received from the customer.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein the order processing circuitry is configured to process a customer's voice message associated with the request for an item being ordered.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein the voice message identifies the requested item.

9. The system of claim 7, wherein the voice message identifies a requested time interval for delivery.

10. The system of claim 7, wherein the voice message identifies a requested point of sale.

11. The system of claim 7, wherein the voice message identifies the customer.

12. The system of claim 1, wherein the order processing circuitry is configured to produce a voice message providing the customer with information relating to the request for an item being ordered.

13. The system of claim 1, further comprising control circuitry configured to interact with the processing circuitry during the session with the customer.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein the processing circuitry interacts with the control circuitry during the session with the customer to determine whether the request for an item can be fulfilled.

15. The system of claim 13, wherein during the session with the customer, the control circuitry provides the processing circuitry with a customer's profile indicating preferences of the customer.

16. The system of claim 13, wherein during the session with the customer, the control circuitry provides the processing circuitry with information on a point of sale selected by the customer.

17. The system of claim 13, wherein during the session with the customer, the control circuitry provides the processing circuitry with information on availability of the item requested by the customer.

18. A method of processing a telephone order for an item comprising:
receiving a telephone call from a customer, and
without intervention of a human operator, conducting an interactive session with the customer to fulfill a request to order the item.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the interactive session includes an exchange of voice messages.

20. The method of claim 18, wherein the interactive session includes determining whether the requested item is available.

21. The method of claim 18, wherein the interactive session includes determining whether the requested item is available for delivery during a time interval requested by the customer.

22. A call center for ordering products in a retail system, the call center comprising:
an input telephone circuit for receiving a telephone call from a customer, and
a processing unit responsive to information supplied by the customer to fulfill a customer's request to order an item, whereby the item is ordered without intervention of a human operator.